

The American TEACHER

APRIL, 1918

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**RELATION OF TEACHER
TOWARD SCHOOL**

THE GREAT DICHOTOMY

**CONFESSIONS OF A
"GOOD" STUDENT**

REVISING THE BY-LAWS

**Democracy in Education
Education for Democracy**

Keep the Home Fires Burning

IN his book, "A Student in Arms," Donald Hankey speaks of the English forces. "In the old Regular Army it has always been recognized that all officers and N C O's could not be expected to be born leaders of men. The whole system of military discipline has been built up with a view to relieving the strain on the individual. The officer's authority is carefully guarded by an elaborate system designed to give him prestige. . . . His authority is made to depend as little as possible on his own force of character. . . . In fact the Regular Army is a magnificent example of the efficiency of discipline. . . . In a battalion of the New Army the conditions are wholly different. The vast majority both of the N C O's and the men are . . . quite new to discipline, and full of pernicious civilian ideas about 'liberty' and 'the rights of man' . . . The net result is that a greatly increased strain is thrown on the individual leader."

And that is the difference between the militarism of Germany and the military efficiency of the Allies. It is the difference between autocracy and democracy.

Democracy is suggestive of responsibility, of individual and collective responsibility, it is not a hiding behind discipline. It provides equal opportunities and demands the maximum of service. It builds upon the finest traits in human nature. It postulates expression as opposed to repression. It is a religion of inspiration and aspiration rather than convention and anathema.

Friend Teacher, are you feeding the flame of democracy? Are you preparing a place of light and enlightenment for the returning victorious hosts who will have made this sphere hospitable to democratic ideals? For there lies your service so long as you cannot wield the sword at the front. **THE AMERICAN TEACHER** has long

struggled to maintain intact its front against reactionary and selfish economic forces. The struggle goes on, despite the salients that indent our line. Are you shoulder to shoulder with us? Have you brought in all the recruits you can? Your ideas are our ammunition. Are you keeping us supplied? Are you keeping the home fires of democracy burning?

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The American Teacher

Vol. VII., No. 4

APRIL, 1918

One Dollar a Year

Second Wind

WITH the outbreak of the war literally thousands of organizations sprang into being for the purpose of promoting the various kinds of service felt to be necessary in the crisis. Many of these agencies undertook to organize boys and girls, in school and out, for efficient patriotic service. The multiplicity of agencies and the confusion of aims led to a great deal of waste, thru futilities and thru duplications and thru crossing of purposes. Order is gradually being established, and we are coming to realize that in addition to devotion and service we need also coordination and system. The Education Committee of the Illinois State Council of Defense has set an excellent example of useful service by educators. Less dramatic and less picturesque than some other activities, the work of this committee in clearing the various enterprises that have to do with the schools and the children is of great value. The mere withholding of approval for certain undertakings on the ground that they duplicate other work already under way is in itself a real service, which only too few appreciate. Every person who is not subject to constant guardianship must be given the opportunity to work at present to the utmost of his capacity; but we must not let the delusion grow that the output of effort and the arousing of emotions will of themselves help win the war. The efforts must be directed to ends of recognizable meaning, and the emotions must serve to unite the people in the common purpose. To bring about such guidance and correlation, the teachers on this committee are rendering service of a high order.

One Year

A YEAR of war has brought with it many changes in the temper of our people. Not all of the changes are

altogether desirable; nor are they all deplorable. They are the changes that will make for a closer unity of national spirit, for a better understanding between sections and classes, for a clearer visualization of ideals. There is evident, despite frequent outbursts of violence and low emotionalism, a mellowing of the militarist thru contact with the physical and spiritual sufferings entailed by the war. There is evident also a gradual acceptance of the necessity for the war on the part of many whose sentiments revolted against the elemental resort to physical force for the adjustment of twentieth century disputes. Many of those who appeared at first hostile to the national purpose we have come to recognize as being opposed merely to the means adopted; and of these many are becoming not only reconciled to the means, but active, enthusiastic supporters of the administration's war measures. In view of these changes we may be encouraged to hope for a progressive dominance of reason in human relations; and we may be rebuked for our intolerance and our impatience when confronted with antagonistic opinions and viewpoints.

We have the utmost confidence in the statesmanship and in the sincerity of our, of the world's great schoolmaster, Woodrow Wilson. We are with him and with the sound, if not always articulate, sentiment of the great masses of our people, if fighting for universal peace and justice. We realize that these blessings are attainable only when nations, like individuals, are honest in their dealings with one another, only when nations, like individuals, seek to live in a way that does not cause harm to others, when each seeks to gain no advantage at the expense of others.

We in America have learned that no nation lives to itself alone; and that an injury to one is the concern of all the others. We

have learned that within the nation we cannot look for peace and justice so long as aggression and exploitation are accepted as the normal and legitimate prerogatives of the powerful and unscrupulous. And we are learning that democracy means more than being let alone to pursue our private gains, to mind our own business. We are learning that it means a new way of life, a way for all people and for all nations to thrive together in mutual helpfulness and consideration, in honor and in justice.

We must fight the war thru because at its conclusion will be determined whether the ideals of human brotherhood and democracy and justice for all will prevail, or the ancient rule of autocratic brutality and domination. We wish the triumph of the new way of life.

A Proposal for a Teachers Council in Chicago

BOTH the Chicago Federation of Men Teachers and the Federation of Women High School Teachers have submitted to the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education recommendations concerning a High School Teachers Council, which, if adopted, would contribute directly to one of the primary objectives of the Federations, namely, democracy in education.

The plan provides that the Council shall consist of one delegate from each Chicago high school and one additional delegate from each high school in which the teachers exceed fifty in number, for each additional fifty teachers or major fraction thereof. The delegates are to be elected by ballot by the teachers of the school for a term of one year. There are to be four regular meetings of the Council a year, but special meetings may be held at the call of the Superintendent of Schools or of one-fourth of the membership of the Council. All resolutions and recommendations adopted by the Council shall be posted by the delegate on the bulletin boards of the schools.

It is not intended that the Council shall

supplant the Board of Education's legislative or administrative powers. It is to have advisory powers only. It shall be the duty of the Council to consider and recommend action on all questions concerning the Chicago high schools which may be submitted for its consideration by the Superintendent of Schools. A delegate shall present to the Council for its consideration, and file a copy thereof with the Secretary, any question which shall be submitted to him in writing for such purpose signed by five teachers. The Council may consider and recommend action on other questions which have to do with the administration of Chicago high schools, or the welfare of teachers or pupils of the same.

The plan specifically calls for the submitting to the consideration of the Council the following questions of high school administration:

- 1 Text-books, educational supplies and equipment for use in the Chicago high schools.
- 2 Systems of records and reports for use in the Chicago high schools.
- 3 Courses of study for the Chicago high schools.

Realism in the Modern Classroom

WE fail to accredit youngsters with the shrewdness they actually possess. In relation to "worldly" matters they are wise beyond their years. Children of fourteen, bred in a tenement environment, habitués of the movies and the musical comedy and the vaudeville and the raw melodrama, night wanderers amidst a varied crude life of spooning, are not what you might call "unsophisticated" or "innocent." They understand (tho superficially) the "tricks of the trade" and "shady" meanings and the vogue of smart smut. They are "wise" to this and that. Elders who are ashamed of vulgar truth hotly deny these characterizations of the city-saturated youngster. Yet these characterizations are essentially and patently true.

This neo-modern son of the gay-white-way-cosmopolis constitutes the most tragic "problem" in the history of education. Our school education hasn't bothered its stupid head about this salvation or damnation. The neglect has been immensely costly. The sensible thing to do is to *fetch into the classroom* all those mud-gutter experiences, in devotion to which the city youngster pledges an allegiance that excels in honesty and in passion his lip-loyalty to the symbolic flag by as much as the adult's love of his own way of living exceeds in intensity the admiration he may profess for his neighbor's mode of living. If the school room cannot invent means and methods whereby the degradation of the gutter may be sifted and refined and cleansed and made valuable for youth's everyday life, the miscarriage of education will be woefully complete. Against that distressful time let us take some sane measures of prevention. The first step toward purification of gutter-experience is the frank recognition of the tense vitality, the gripping interest of the thing we would refashion. We must make the sons of the cosmopolis (and the gossipy little daughters, too!) conscious of our faith in them and of our dignified respect for *their* modes of making life worth living.

What are the juvenile possibilities in a frank world of common knowledge, and self-analysis? The education of youth in the essential facts of sex has been for years advocated as a necessary part of the general movement for health. The need for such instruction is generally recognized, altho we have neither the teachers nor the technique to undertake it upon a comprehensive scale. But what is of perhaps greater significance, the psychical side of the child's sexual development, is completely disregarded by educators. This is in part due to our ignorance of the subject; but our ignorance is in part due to our traditional taboos. Sooner or later the psycho-sexuality of children arrived at puberty must become a matter of deep concern to the class room teacher. Proper educational guidance should effect a transformation of vulgarity into dignity. Honest introspection must be made to dissipate dirty frivolity and to prepare the mind for honor.

Symptomatic Teapot Tempests

THE publication of a pamphlet now being distributed among teachers, by one who until a year ago was chairman of the drawing department in one of our large eastern high schools, is indeed symptomatic and should give pause to those at the head of the educational systems. The pamphlet professes to be a protest against autocracy in the schools, and sets forth the history of the monthly and annual student publications of that high school for the four years during which the author was associated with the work. If the conditions here presented actually exist, then those at whom she points an accusing finger may well question their right to the moral and intellectual leadership of our young men and women. As we turn from page to page and learn of the attitude of these "educators" toward one another and toward their charges, the conviction grows that if these be the men and women to whom we are entrusting the education of our children, if these be the guardians of our future citizenry, then there is indeed little to hope for.

Leaving the merits of the case itself entirely aside, and judging solely the general conditions here portrayed, one fact forcibly impresses itself upon us, and that is that there are in our midst men and women utterly lacking in those fundamental qualities which are taken for granted by all who make the slightest claim to culture and development. It is something of a shock to learn that among our colleagues are some who do not scruple to bully and to "get even," to seek petty revenge and obstruct in a hundred trivial ways the work of others. We are loath to admit that these conditions exist and should like to believe otherwise, but here are the facts before us, and so far as we know there has been no refutation of them. What are we thinking of the poster incident, for example, where a teacher was found guilty of tearing a poster from the bulletin boards just because it did not altogether please him? And what of the principal who supported the

teacher in this action and that, too, in spite of the fact that permission had previously been obtained from him to place the poster upon the bulletin board? One hardly knows how to characterize such acts. It is difficult to believe that these are the doings of grown-up and presumably intelligent beings. Yet these people are holding positions of authority and responsibility in our educational system. Fortunately, we have not many such. It is a sufficient indictment, however, that there should be any. And, more deplorable still, is the demoralizing effect of a few such individuals on the student body.

If education is to mean more than the mere imparting of information, more than a system of preparing students to pass examinations and procure Regents' counts, it must have as its goal the inculcation of certain well-defined attitudes toward life and human relationships; the positing of ideals both for the individual and the group. And how is this possible with teachers of the type described in this report? How can they function in any capacity other than that of mere transmitters of rules and formulas? We may not be able to attain high standards of scholarship or erudition, or we may not be capable of very fine ethical or moral distinctions, but we surely cannot be accused of demanding too much when we require of those in the profession an observance of the ordinary decencies that obtain among mature men and women in other callings.

The War and the Schools

WHAT is the utmost that the schools can do to aid the nation in the war emergency? The need for all sorts of "work" is obvious; and the physical availability of teachers and pupils, at least the older pupils, is equally obvious. After the first stampede, however, it became apparent here, as it had already become certain in England and France, that the grinding of seed corn is poor economy. As a result of a series of conferences called to answer this vexing question, a joint statement has been

issued under the auspices of the War Department, the Navy Department, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Labor, the United States Civil Service Commission, and the Department of the Interior. The substance of this statement, with the practical applications, appear in the summary and conclusions, as follows:

There appears to be nothing in the present or prospective war emergency to justify curtailment in any respect of the sessions of the elementary schools, or of the education of boys and girls under 14 years of age, and nothing which should serve as an excuse for interference with the progressive development of the school system. Teachers and pupils may be encouraged to find ways of performing in the schools some service having war value, such as activities connected with the Junior Red Cross, War Garden Work, Boy Scouts, War Thrift work, and the like. Opportunities should be found to introduce into the school activities having real educational value, which at the same time link up the public schools with the ideals of service and self-sacrifice actuating our people, and bring home to the consciousness of teachers, pupils, and parents the essential unity of the nation in this great crisis.

In view of the progress that has been made in this country in the enactment of compulsory education legislation, it is assumed at the outset that there is no question that in the country and villages all girls under 14 years of age, and all boys under 12, might well continue in school thru the summer, wherever the condition of the school funds makes this at all possible.

In the cities, there would be no interference with the supply of needed labor if all children under 14 continue in school to the end of the regular session, and thru the summer as well; and there would be but little interference if all children under 16 continue in school. With reference to boys and girls over these ages, the recommendations which follow indicate certain directions in which it is believed the school program may be modified when necessary to meet emergencies.

One of the places in which there appears to be immediate demand for modification of the high school program is in respect to the need for agricultural labor. Much valuable service can be rendered by carefully selecting and training boys to assist in meeting this demand. It cannot be too

strongly urged, however, that each pupil's case be considered individually, and no pupil should be excused from school for this purpose except with the written consent of the parents, to accept specified employment for a definite term, under responsible supervision by the school or by other approved agencies of the conditions of employment.

It would be helpful in cities, and especially in industrial communities, if for boys and girls over 14 years of age in or out of school there could be introduced certain definite courses looking toward a cooperative half-time plan of school attendance and employment thruout the year.

In general, it is believed that wherever school boards can find the means, the present emergency is an opportune time for readjusting the schools on an all-year-round basis, with a school year of 48 weeks, divided into four quarters of 12 weeks each. The schools would then be in continuous operation, but individual teachers and pupils would have the option of taking one quarter off at prearranged periods for needed change.

If it is not practicable for the schools to change at once to the all-year-round program, a much-needed service can be rendered in many localities by organizing special summer and evening classes to train young people for the civil service, and to train stenographers, typewriters, clerks, and secretaries for the commercial world. In many communities will be found numbers of adult women who are free to avail themselves of special training to fit for various kinds of positions in office and clerical work, taking temporarily the places of men called to the colors or to other employment.

Some schools should consider the possibility of arranging a schedule for certain groups of students having a definite prospect of service, in accordance with which the summer months would be spent in school, leaving the students free to work on the farms during planting time in the spring and again during harvest time in the fall. In still other cases, particularly in the smaller communities, time may be secured for farm work by omitting the usual spring vacation, by holding school on Saturdays, and otherwise speeding up, and thus completing the term's studies some weeks in advance of the usual date for closing the school.

Special programs should be reserved in general for individual students or specially selected groups of students who have defi-

nite plans for proper use of the time thus taken from the school. In no case can justification be found for the general shortening of the school term in the expectation that some students may find places of useful service.

In response to definite requests from Government agencies, schools should be used from time to time for specific preparation of individuals for immediate service.

Boys and girls should be urged, as a patriotic duty, to remain in school to the completion of the high school course, and in increasing numbers to enter upon college and university courses, especially in technical and scientific lines, and normal school courses, to meet the great need for trained men and women.

If we consider it part of our patriotic duty to support the administration in full confidence that the various departments are doing their work as sincerely and as efficiently as is humanly possible, we must fight every attempt to demoralize our educational efforts on the pretext that the nation needs to use up its children in ways that ordinarily mean private profits at the expense of the future men and women. The utmost that educators can do to aid the nation is to educate to the best of their ability and to the limit of their strength.

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The True Relation of Teacher Toward School

HON SAMUEL D LEVY

Associate Justice of the Children's Court, New York

WHAT has the Public School done for the social life of the community? Has it met its opportunity or has it shirked it? Or does it recognize it? Or is it in ignorance of it? Of course, the answer depends in large measure upon the viewpoint, or rather upon the recognition of the situation.

The teacher is merely a spoke in the complex educational wheel and can do nothing in the whirligig of her pedagogical life but view with anxiety the cog and the rim of that wheel, feeling the uselessness of her work and career, looking forward to the goal, to the day of her retirement when she can rest her weary body. Then in the retrospect she will know how unsatisfactory was the result of her efforts in teaching the young idea, she will then acknowledge the entire absence of those things in the child's school life that would have been so useful to him. If she now had her way, fifty percent of the things that she taught would be eliminated, and instead a precious fifty percent added that would make of our boys and girls intelligent, thinking children,—children that, were they so taught, would have independent thought and initiative, and healthy minds. So much for the teacher's side.

Now for the peoples' side, the side of the commonwealth. I have spoken of the narrow groove that hems in the divinity of the teacher. I have tried to indicate that it is not the teacher's fault that she is the victim of an impracticable and impossible system, engrafted upon her by the ages. I speak now for the laity, for those millions of parents who are anxious that their children should receive the best possible education, an education that will fit them at sixteen to go out into the world and do their part in the struggle for existence, and do it well. The parents frequently, nay invariably, believe that

the child has been made fit, while they, the parents, were struggling and scrimping and making every possible sacrifice for the day when the child should help the growing family. Has the child been made fit? He certainly has not. The things that boy and girl should have been taught and should know could fill books. He doesn't know the streets of the city in which he lives. He knows from his geography where Timbuctoo is, but he does not know the counties in his own home State. In his examinations for civil service positions, he proves his ignorance. In other words, he does not know the things that are really worth while, the essentials, the practicalities of life which would do him some real, lasting good when he starts out to earn his own living.

What has the school system done on the side of moral and ethical teaching? Instead of teaching the child thru the kindergarten in a proper and truly moral way, eugenics, sex hygiene and the like, which would work for character building, the school keeps the child in absolute ignorance on these vital matters and he learns them not as an integral part of the course of studies but in a perverted way from the street gamin, and the delinquent juvenile and adult. In fact, juvenile delinquency is in large part caused by this utter ignorance of these subjects which, if known, would give an entirely different bent to children's otherwise anti-social conduct. This perverted knowledge, thus clandestinely gained by whispering in the ear of a boy or girl, the "bad things," comes as a revelation, and what so grips the child as information coming in that way? Its very novelty is compelling and it no sooner is imparted, when "bang!" like the horse at a race course when the bell is rung, the child "is off," and how difficult, when once "off" to be reclaimed and redeemed. Why not be-

gin at the other end and secure the child's confidence when in the kindergarten rather than to coerce it at the tail end thru Big Sisters and Big Brothers, and Probation Officers.

Miss Garrett told us how beautifully the sex lesson was taught to a kindergarten class when rabbits were brought into the class room and lived in a large box provided them by the children. How the little children loved them, and brought them carrots and greens. How an interesting day arrived when the female rabbit was to be blessed with little bunnies. How the children tip-toed into the class room, and spoke in undertones, "not to frighten the nervous little mother to be." How there was a great joy when bunnies arrived. How the children strove mightily to bring every possible thing that would bring comfort to the mother. How quiet the children were! How these lessons were taken home, and repeated when the stork brought little baby brother or sister. How the child again tip-toed and spoke in undertones so that poor nervous mother would not be upset! Talk about moral and ethical and sex lessons? Why, this Divine Message was brought home to the children naturally, impressively and most beautifully, a message that they could never forget. I shall not speak of the refining influence of such lessons or how a holy and virile fact, an ethical and moral lesson was practically implanted and how all this spelt for character building. It may be said that such teaching usurps the parents' prerogative. I doubt whether any parent could impart the lesson so thoroly or so beautifully as that indicated. Fifty per cent of the parents, well-intentioned, well meaning and good, have not the knowledge nor intelligence nor education nor psychological judgment understandingly to impart the lesson.

A portion of the work of the teacher should be to enter the home of each child in her class, get acquainted with home and environmental conditions, and keep a record of such conditions. She should advise parents and children as to the orderly procedure in the home; see that the parent gives the most nutritive

food; to give the child the muscle and strength to work hard and to play hard; to advise against unsuitable foods; to see that the home is sanitary and properly ventilated by day and night. And if proper food is not given, or if rooms are not sanitary because of poverty or lack of income, to get in touch with those philanthropic or other social agencies that will see these conditions properly remedied. It should be the duty of the Board of Education to see to it that every five or six school blocks is provided with a school clinic, where every child is from time to time examined physically and mentally, and where a strict record kept so that on the first indication of a tuberculosis or cardiac disorder of malnutrition or eye, throat or other trouble, immediate attention may be given and unfavorable development arrested, or where in a case of mastoid or enlarged tonsils, when necessary, the child may receive surgical treatment. Then you are going to have a healthier and stronger and longer lived race, and a higher standard of citizenry. Add to this the Community Center, where the school children may have a social center for companionship and association and an outlet for their play propensities, and you will minimize delinquency so that there will be but one case where now there are five.

Again, I hear some teachers saying, "you mean the teacher shall take the place of the parent?" Why no, not at all; my thought is that the teacher shall be a supplement to the home, an auxiliary to parenthood, advising, counselling and helping both parent and child to reach a higher standard of social, mental, physical, economical level of development. One visit during a school term to the home of each child of her class by the teacher is all that is required, plus mothers' meeting, as at present. How will this eventually affect the teacher? It will take seventy-five percent of the present strain off of the teacher. She will be dealing with an entirely different human being. She will find that the child is *en rapport* with the teacher. That the parent is likewise in perfect touch with the school. That the pupil does not fear his teacher; he feels and knows that the

teacher is not only his friend, she is the friend of the family; this not only ends markedly in greater respect, but it places the child in an entirely different social relation to the teacher and the school. The teacher will find her work easier; the child thus becoming intensely interested in his school life,

and in every way a better, finer, stronger and more apt pupil, punctual in attendance, correct in deportment, more easily instructed, most easily managed, and the teacher feeling herself growing younger and more buoyant from day to day, and what was an irksome task becomes a real pleasure, an eternal joy.

The Great Dichotomy

FRANKLIN J KELLER

Assistant Principal, P. S. 43, Bronx

LIKE all generic terms, "radical" and "conservative" vary in connotation with the mental, the experiential background of the individual. In their wake follows a long line of old associations welded into a favorable or an unfavorable prejudice by the emotional accompaniments. There must necessarily be numerous shortcomings in any extremist point of view, and it is a consideration of these, along with the determination of some common ground, that deserves serious consideration.

In the revulsion against the administrative spirit which finds its chief function to be that of imposing and checking up the performance of petty detail there arises the aversion to planning of any kind, a kind of inefficiency that takes refuge in the mouthing of fine ideals. The transcending problem of the future, the problem that will have to be answered in no uncertain terms when the war ends, will be, *How can democracy be made efficient?* And at the same time become more and more a democracy? If the radical can reach no better solution than the suggestion that aim and method and result are futile (the plan book is the embodiment of these) then radicalism itself is futile, for it is essentially destructive and of no avail.

To plan, to organize, to coordinate, this is the business of centralized control. That this control should be vested in the man or woman who is aided and, in the end, controlled in

turn by the collective thought of the body politic with which he is working, is obvious in a democracy. That he should be shorn of the powers of leadership and divested of those instruments wherewith his leadership can be made effective, is to wreck the very democracy which the future holds in its hand. Viewed in this light it is patent that much nonsense is uttered both as to principals and superintendents. More power to the leader to carry thru a policy, but more and more power to the people, the teachers and parents, the as yet insufficiently conscious public to construct that policy, to select that leader, and to hold up his hands in bringing that policy to fruition.

* * *

TO experienced parents the advice of bachelor friends as to the upbringing of children is always amusing. If followed, in many cases the results would undoubtedly prove disastrous. The petty vexations, the measures necessary to secure peace and concord are seldom vivid in the imaginations of the uninitiated. The young lover cannot envisage all the complexities of household organization, especially in relation to the ecstasy of his soul-stirring love. Thus it takes penetrating imagination and keen sympathy for the subordinate to meet understandingly the problems of the man or woman in office. So we have radical subordinates who, when fate places them in responsible

positions, become conservative and even reactionary. The important point is that criticisms of superiors arising from misunderstandings, from love of the easy sport of ridiculing, only tend to drive supervisors farther out of touch with the daily vexations of the journeyman worker. They thus receive just one more incentive to ignore the people upon whom their very existence depends and to issue orders from on high. Juvenile roguishness on one hand only excuses Homeric laughter on the other.

It is only at long intervals that the dreams of radicals come true, and then often with such travail and sorrow that they wonder whether it has all been worth while. Therefore the world seems to them to pass by and pass on with the most desirable ends in life never reached. Evil always seems to have somewhat the better of the argument, virtue withers and dies. The youthful dreamer becomes the middle-aged cynic or perhaps the agnostic or atheist. Who can reverence the god of unfulfillment, who can have faith in him who does not slay the hosts of unrighteousness? Whether or not such an attitude has philosophic sanction is neither here nor there, so long as cynicism and irreverence disqualify the thinkers from contributing to the constructive social program. If he is a teacher he skulks in the class room while education languishes and dies.

* * *

HISTORY is our social inheritance but many a radical disowns himself. He refuses to profit by the lessons of those who have succeeded and failed in the past, holding that nothing in life remains the same, not even human nature. We hope it is true enough that changes are ever taking place, but they occur slowly, not with a mad rush; and after all history is but a record of these changes, which, rightly interpreted, are full of suggestion for the future. To fling away the fruits of centuries in the belief that everything new and different must be good is to run counter to common sense experience. Then it must be remembered that the immediate future, which by hypothesis would contain all the good, would have to give way entirely to the remote future if the

same theory of radical change were to hold.

In order to differ with the present order of things the radical must be an analytic thinker, a thinker moreover whose thoughts are continually striving for realization. He is always dissatisfied. The natural result is expression in words. He must tell the world of the way in which it should go, he must relieve his own nervous tension by bringing to the surface what would otherwise be suppressed and dangerous desires. He is talkative and argumentative. In many ways he is a nuisance.

Such are some of the less pleasing traits of the extreme radical. They are set forth in all sympathy by one who himself has been classed as a radical—an obnoxious one.

* * *

NOW for the opposite pole. He is just old-fashioned enough to hold that what has worked for centuries and has been found workable will be good enough for the future. The good is what has been. This, of course, is tantamount to saying that the only evolution is nature's scheme of accidental trial and error, that the mind of man is of no account. Someone has defined education as conscious evolution—*conscious* evolution, experiment, constructive thinking, and *then* trial and error.

The conservative is a comfortable thinker, which is to say, he is no thinker at all. He is a reflector, a raconteur to himself, he mulls over what the world has already done for him. He does not feel the need to cut his way thru the jungle of the social complex; hence, he does not think, he does not want to move. He becomes encrusted in habit; and as the world does nevertheless move on, he becomes fossilized.

His mind courses in the channels marked out by convention, by the moral code of the community. This is an essentially safe procedure for one is always sure of the backing of a majority. There is no risk in exalting the value of reading, writing and arithmetic, nor in singing the praises of strict obedience to orders. Few ears will be jarred while listening to the chorus of order and efficiency. Therefore the life of the pure and the good becomes also the life of ease and peace.

There is a certain blindness in the conservative that shuts out from his life the possibilities of the rebellious soul, the heights to which it may rise as well as the depths to which it may fall. There is a lack of faith in life itself, in the American ideal of the sovereignty of the soul, in the rights of individuals and nations to voice effectively their desires, and to have them honored by an enlightened democracy. The conservative devours his heritage but leaves nothing to his children.

As a result of all this he ensconces himself securely in his social class, to which the rest of the world may look up as the solid matrix that holds the diverse elements together. And between the matrix and the elements which deem it indispensable to the continuance of earthly affairs, we find a good part of the world conservative.

* * *

EXTREMES do meet at times. There are characteristics which are common to both. They both think in categories and usually to the hindrance of clear reasoning. For the conservative that which is is that which is good. For the radical, that which is not is that which ought to be. And there's an end on't. And in their characterization of each other the same kind of association operates. To the former the term radical immediately arouses ideas of all that is reprehensible in any and all radicals that were ever heard or written about. To the latter the word conservative works a similar magic. The economy of association in thinking becomes an almost insurmountable obstacle to sane progress. There is no more striking example of this category-damnation than the present tendency to label every action that does not conform to one's own philosophy as unpatriotic.

The natural implication of all that has been said is that all virtue resides in the middle course. Yet the dangers are here as well. To begin with we do not, as a nation, lean to compromise. We are full of enthusiasm, we are emotional, and it is only with emotion behind them that ideas can be made to work themselves out in action. The middle course leaves one cold; to see two sides of the ques-

tion clearly and to view them sympathetically is to suffer lukewarmness by neutralization.

Steering between two extremes, taking something that is good from one side, then a little that is worth while from the other, soon leads to opportunism of a most undesirable kind. For after all it is the ideals that men hold that supply the fine enthusiasms, and if the only ideal is that of picking up the scraps that others let fall, only a cautious expediency will remain where there should be a consuming fire. Our ideals must be our own, and we must constantly strive to fulfill them. Ideals are the last commodity in life that we can afford to cheapen. Heaven defend us from becoming dully mediocre, from becoming bourgeois in our teaching.

* * *

THEN what *shall* we do as teachers? If both ends and the middle present dangers, what course shall we pursue? If there is any answer it is that there is no simple answer, unless it is that teaching is life and life is teaching, and that we must meet our problems in the spirit that we meet life. If we have faith in the ideals of democracy then let us fight for them whether thereby we contend with radicals or with conservatives, with superiors or with subordinates. If we wish to make life easy by finding justification for our own class, whether it be radical or conservative, in every move we make or every thought we think, the road will be a hard one. If we justify it in our own souls, it will be—just as hard. But ideals we must have, and perhaps as strong as any of them must be that of condoning in others and avoiding in ourselves in so far as possible the faults that appear so glaring in our opponents.

LOYALTY PLEDGE

I, the undersigned, a lover of ideas, do herewith gladly promise to contribute to the American Teacher the sum of \$..... per month for 1918.

My initial contribution is \$.....

(Signed)

Address

The Confessions of a "Good" Student

MY confession will sound passionate and partisan. I mean it to be both. I am not one of those who minimize truth in order to maximize good fellowship. *Nothing is of such shattering importance as the recognition and picturesque labeling of evil.* We cannot improve ourselves or our institutions lest we preparatorily search out the startling imperfections extant in man's world. I shall speak as one whose whole purpose is to reform and radically to reshape existing institutions, the most aimless of which (at present) is the educational system. Let me recount the inspiring tales of woe which I have harbored in memory as the true narrative of education's triviality. My elementary school training was a long discipline in timidity and in self-repression; whatever self-expression was permitted was never an honest self-expression. It was always an echo of maturer thought, an inane repetition of approved experience. Individuality meant nothing. The development of personality was talked about but never encouraged. Bookishness sapped imagination. Rigorous uniformity devitalized originality. The unique experiences of the pupil were carefully excluded from classroom interests as idiosyncrasies irrelevant to the high themes of scholarship. Discipline secured by main force, lessons taught by main force, fellowship promoted by main force, idealism inculcated by main force. Imposition was the policeman. Disposition was the intractable pupil! That Impositions might reign unperturbed, dispositions were quelled.

I doubt whether any of my teachers had any intelligent notions of character-building, or if they did, their closeted allegiance to a repressive system made impossible the carrying out of their truer theories of human unfoldment. This tragic waste of power and personality (on the part of student and

teacher) has undoubtedly been somewhat allayed by the introduction into the class work of greater informality, more frank analysis, a lively sympathy with the problems of an evolving social democracy, a genuine respect for the pupil-mind, a concentration upon honest methods of thinking. There's a futurist inspiration in the approaching radical humanization of the class room. It is hardly necessary to say that the "methods" of teaching of those earlier days were slightly educative and abnormally uninspiring. Most things we learned were fortunately not memorable so that commencement virtually signified not a fulfillment, but a beginning. For the delight of school teachers and their successful pupil-graduates, I must quote a paragraph written by Dr William H Maxwell (in the *Educational Journal*, 1915): "There is one test of the efficiency of a school which surpasses even a properly conducted examination. That is the kind of men and women the school's pupils turn out to be. Wherever you find worthy and successful men and women speaking kindly of the old school and the old teachers; when they tell with what sweetness and light their mistakes were corrected; with what a firm hand their moral weaknesses were held in check; when they look back on the school premises, however poor they may have been, as hallowed ground; when you find them attributing their successes to their school training, you may rest assured the school they attended was an efficient school. That is the supreme test."

Could self-delusion flourish more luxuriantly than in this hot-house of sentimentalism? The too evident absurdity of this "supreme" test is mournful to realists and oh so heart-rending!

The monotony of my early school life was simply appalling. Spontaneity was forbidden fruit. Teacher and taught were avowed enemies (even when they pretended to fra-

ternize), sedulously pursuing opposed aims. It was the Mentor's business to "catch" the student and the student's mission to "cheat" the teacher. Neither ever realized that he was cheating and degrading himself. The lies, the evasions, the opportunisms of the little "scholars" were maliciously punished. The pretences, the icy dignity, the policemanliness of the teacher, were no less maliciously assailed by the "bad" boys. Their recriminations and retaliations—an irate teacher actually pursuing a culprit around the room in a kind of hide-and-seek chase, while the biased spectators exploded with derision and unholy laughter—were the comedy relief which saved our spontaneities from a premature death. To escape the oppressions of boredom, even good pupils took to mischief-making and teacher-plaguing. There's too much to relate. And why rehearse the familiar broad farces of our pompous school days? I don't know whether to laugh or to weep as I recall those aimless days wasted in verbal futilities (called education) and in retaliatory behavior (called discipline). The teacher was hard beset and most wretched, caught lucklessly between the classroom devils and the deep sea of confusion in which his hot pedagogic head swam. Most likely the teacher suffered more than did his callous charges. He was more sensitive and dignified. He took every breach, every smallest offense, personally. No wonder his docket was always crowded. His juvenile court harassed his weary brain beyond endurance. Oh, how the dear Mentor must have hated his pupils and his chosen profession as he stood face to face with a classroom full of juvenile offenders, each more eager than his neighbor to torture his Superior. What "lasting good" any person has ever derived from the seven or eight long years spent in an elementary school (as at present to a large extent still constituted) it is hard to say. The meagre fact-knowledge he is forced to acquire there is forgotten in a jiffy. His power over his impulses or instincts or imagination is of course non-existent at that early age, thanks to our theory that a child must be kept ignorant of the workings of his body and mind.

My high school confinement was more galling to my spirit than simple words can convey. The topic of greatest *human* interest we were permitted to discuss periodically (its very periodicity chilled the normal enthusiasm of spontaneity) was: "How did you spend your vacation?" Inasmuch as the majority of us never knew the joys of spending a vacation (or of "spending" during a vacation), we recreated our wasted vacations into truly sublime interludes. How we did lie! There wasn't one subject even remotely important to us as citizen-employees in a stratified society. After four years of Latin, even the "honor" students couldn't appreciate the greatness that was Rome! God, how cultured we were. We could quickly distinguish between an ablative and a genitive case, between a condition contrary to fact (use subjunctive!) and the hortative subjunctive. Declensions and conjugations rolled off our Romish tongues like so many jeremiads against Cataline. What uncanny knowledge was ours!

And while the whole world wondered how such little heads as ours could carry all the knowledge we thought we knew, we began to wonder in earnest about what we really knew. Nor were we the first that ever burst into that silent sea of disillusionment. Four years of Latin! What did we *understand*? Four years of mathematics (a mystifying hieroglyphics to most minds, including the majority of teachers of mathematics); what did we *understand*? Biology, plentiful ancient history, German grammar (never to be used again by the "educated" students), inscrutable physics, English "classics" (lauded by the conscientious pedagogue and rudely ignored by pupil and teacher alike—when they honestly revealed their *common* tastes), Bible readings (as respectfully listened to as parental advice gratuitously showed upon our modern youth)—all these cultural subjects we heroically "got thru" only to discover that they had never got thru us! No intelligent chap, if he were confronted with any true alternative, would consent to squander his precious substance in a high school. At the age of ten, every alert child

ought to be as mature intellectually as the average high school graduate is. The average age of high school graduates is eighteen. Three years from that date, our glorious republic confers upon these cultured young men the privilege of actual citizenship. And yet our high schools make no intelligent, certainly no successful attempt, to induct our youth into the open-mysteries of our industrial democracy. Students are not taught *their rights* as tenants, as employees, as voters, as agitators, as free thinkers, as molders of opinion, as consumers, as producers. Are the students ever encouraged to feel their power as *change-makers*, as *controllers* of their social destiny? They haven't the least *realistic* notion of the social functions of government. They stupidly retard progress because they are not taught how to accelerate it. What little practical insight our students do possess is the by-product (an accidental tho valuable good), not the predetermined product, of their education. When that by-product has been magnified into the importance of a genuine product, secondary education will have begun to *educate*.

My college "education" was a most lamentable waste of opportunity. The pursuits I was passionately fond of I had to neglect and neglect in order to "cram" for examinations or for daily recitation. "Recitation," the dons called it. If we had only been permitted to recite our wrongs, to recite our grievances, to recite *our* opinions, what a spiritualizing experience college schooling might have been. We learned an amazing lot and understood an amazing little. I never had a Professor who taught us how to study. That hard-won ability was assumed to be a natural endowment. There was too much cramming to do; we found no time for thinking. The inevitable result was that the best scholars were frequently the poorest thinkers. Knowledge was rated high. Understanding was not rated at all. It was innocently assumed that knowledge and wisdom are interchangeable. The most original-minded men at college made a practice of neglecting their subjects. They had

to or go without culture. They refused to pay the price. There's more than flippancy in Ingersoll's aphorism: "A college is a place that dims diamonds and polishes pebbles." There's sound good sense in the journalist's advice to college-men: "It will do you more good (if you keep your mind open) to spend one year in a newspaper office than four years at a college." The only abiding wisdom honest college graduates cull from their alma-martyrism is the half-concealed conviction that it was a stupid waste of opportunity.

The most amusing memories cluster about my experiences with Political Economy. No subject intersects our social life at more points than does political economy. Efficient social engineering depends upon a knowledge of these cross-sections. In our colleges, no "courses" are so barren, so distressingly devoid of concrete significance as those presented under the guise of Political Economy. Why? My own experience is illuminating. I discovered before long that *the easiest way to teach disputable doctrines was to avoid specific issues and to stress, as of pivotal importance, vague generalities*. Words and formulæ elicit approval; facts elicit disapproval. Ignore the facts, emphasize the theory—that is the essence of successful teaching. In the political economy classes the heap of verbalistic nonsense uttered alike by professor and student was, I assure you, overwhelming. Critical intelligence was nipped in the bud by blasts of pompous chill deductive theory. We swallowed words because our appetite for honest facts had not been stimulated.

We were never taught that distribution is essentially a problem in ethics. We were never taught that theories are at best shorthand representations of conflicting and at times irreconcilable facts. We were never taught that economists, like other human bunglers, were victims of passionate prejudices. We were never taught that systems of economics, like all other human inventions, are temporary responses to emergency stimuli and must be replaced by more perfect systems as scientific insight and ethical

responsibility increase. We were never taught that exploitation of the overworked and of the undereducated is the "vis a tergo" of the capitalistic mode of production. We were never taught that an enlightened citizenship had it in *its* power to remold industrial autocracy nearer to the human ideals of cooperation and collectivism. We were never taught that mass-movements merit our deepest sympathy, our intellectual aid, our careful attention, because they contained within their hot insurgent assumptions the promise and the potency of a finer democracy. No. These big truths were "personae non gratae" in the political economy sanctum. We studied *theories*: pray, what did we understand of the graphic frictions disturbing the human world outside of our college windows? What did the self-complacent professors know—or care—about the bitter struggles daily waging in mine and mill and factory and office? If they cherished the truth they callously smothered it in awe-inspiring theories. Those of us who were alert and alarmed blurted out the disconcerting facts (now and then) only to meet with sullen indifference on the part of the cultured students and sleek tactful evasions on the part of the professors. They pooh-poohed radicalism because they had pledged allegiance to their—what?—jobs—salaries—class-prejudices or repressive curriculum?

I suppose some persons are better fitted by temperament for *self*-education (with or without the help of schools), while most persons are better endowed by Nature for pursuing and enjoying Mal-education. Mal-education makes Authority the criterion of insight. Self-education makes Reflection the criterion of insight. The difference in values is immeasurable. Most persons can sit for hours and listen interestedly while nothing is being said. Others suffer agony. These "others" ought not to be encouraged to attend our Universities (except as lecturers and critics!). The enormous amount of energy wasted on a Thesis which has already been adequately analyzed and elaborated by a capable mind is appalling. The subjects

chosen, either because of their depth or because of their interminable nature, are far beyond the capacities of the student. The result is that many M.A. and Ph.D. these not only lack originality. The belabored student is continually at work noting what someone else said. He often has no time and no surplus desire to master his inundating material! They are copybook exercises soon to be forgotten by the candidate himself. Post-graduate work as now conducted is tragically wasteful. The student listens patiently (no small virtue!); writes patiently (there's no time to think while writing down the professor's lectures); and copies patiently. This plodding servitude to men and books does not hint at a very inspiring state of affairs.

Post-graduate work is in extreme need of a thousand improvements. But who cares? Systems change slowly.

I confess—to my shame—that I found the post-graduate atmosphere stifling. I am not exaggerating when I say that at times while students, in unintelligible accents, were reading their unintelligible essays, I wanted to shout or throw sticks of dynamite or elocute in billingsgate. I simply couldn't endure the nervous strain of words, words, words. What a suffocating atmosphere. A weary time, a weary time. The intolerable boredom of it all drove me into ecstatic praises of medieval scholasticism. (Extremes meet in a common futility.) I generally recovered my composure in the bracing open where broken-heartedly I buttonholed a fellow sufferer and did beseech him to tell me in communicable English what had it all been about. My heart sank five fathoms low when he enthusiastically imparted to me, in unholy glee, that there was "nothing in it." The accuracy of his pronouncement made me dizzy. I was exhausted by the disillusionment; he was callously jubilant. Failure provoked his mirth. Failure provoked my wrath. No doubt he will one day become a great professor, while I shall only be a mere thinker. Post-graduate work does twist normal men's perspectives—

The testimony is now all gathered in.

What shall we conclude? That much of school education is a tragic failure is a commonplace amongst honest observers. Education's deficiencies are numerous and not easy to minimize until great social changes shall have altered the conceptions of servile and of domineering men. "Educators" are small-minded. They don't understand the nature and aspirations of the society in which we live. Educators are haughty. They don't respect their official inferiors; if they did, they would invite their cooperation in all school matters. Educators are routinists. They prize machinery above individuality. To achieve a gratifying formalism, they willingly subordinate method to result, originality to uniformity, spontaneity to repetition. Automatism has usurped the rights of humanism. Educators are self-complacent autocrats. They resent criticism. They discourage legitimate opposition. They are frankly hostile to different-mindedness. They are eager to persecute agitators (without whose courageous iconoclasm no "system" would ever be improved upon. They brook no interference with their pet schemes.

Certain men or classes of men come to be the accepted guardians and transmitters—instructors—of established doctrines. To question the beliefs is to question their authority; to accept the beliefs is evidence of loyalty to the powers that be, a proof of good citizenship. Passivity, docility, acquiescence, come to be primal intellectual virtues. Facts and events presenting novelty and variety are slighted, or are sheared down till they fit into the Procrustean bed of habitual belief. Inquiry and doubt are silenced by citation of ancient laws or a multitude of miscellaneous and unsifted cases. This attitude of mind generates dislike of change, and the resulting aversion to novelty is fatal to progress. What will not fit into the established canons is outlawed; men who make new discoveries are objects of suspicion and even of persecution. Beliefs that perhaps originally were the products of fairly extensive and careful observation are stereotyped into fixed traditions and semi-sacred dogmas accepted simply upon authority, and are mixed with fantastic conceptions that happen to have

won the acceptance of authorities. (Dewey.)

I have referred to Educators but I really mean Disciplinarians. Great educators of the type of Tolstoi, Shaw, Montessori, Ferrer, Dewey, are the true emancipators of intellect. Their enlightenments, unfortunately, do not affect our school systems as profoundly as one wishes they might. Many paid educators (those that are the conservators of dictatorial officialism) are hopelessly out of sympathy with real enlightenment. Hence they look with suspicion upon daring teachers who invoke the intellectual aid of the great educators. The intellectual cowardice of teachers is proverbial. Officialism endures because teachers are servile. Servility is the virtue of incompetents. Incompetents are flattered into approving their own servitude. Could a situation be more satisfactory to ambitious dictators and more ruinous to education?

ANALYST.

This is the Official Organ
of the
American Federation of Teachers
(Affiliated with American Federation of Labor)

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Revising the By-Laws

BENJAMIN GLASSBERG

BY-LAWS of Boards of Education have almost acquired the sanctity that ordinarily surrounds the Constitution. They are supposed to be the products of the handiwork of members of Boards of Education only, undefiled by the touch of mere teachers, whom they are to govern, and at times tyrannize over.

The Board of Education of New York City is engaged in revising the By-laws. No formal request of a similar nature has come to teachers' organizations to submit suggestions and recommendations. As might be expected the Teachers Union has not allowed that to stand in its way, but has appointed a committee to suggest needed revisions of the formidable looking body of by-laws.

A similar situation is facing the teachers of Chicago. Legislative enactment a short while ago wiped out "the accumulated inheritance of antiquated rules." The new administration thus had an opportunity to start out with a modern set of rules, but Boards of Education seem to be fated to let opportunities slip by; they are either too stubborn or—shall we say? mentally incapable. When the Teachers Federation came to examine the 143 pages of rules proposed by the school administration, they found many of them so reactionary and dangerous that they submitted extended comments and suggested substitutes, and received a promise of a full hearing before action was taken.

It would be well for those who are skeptical about the possibility of teachers sharing in the administration of the schools, who view the movement for Democracy in Education with cynicism, as certain others do President Wilson's insistence on Democracy in diplomacy and international relations, to read the criticisms submitted by the teachers. There is thruout a note of dignity, reasonableness, and good sense; no mere insistence on the "rights" of teachers; no emphasis on purely professional interests. In their criticisms there is the attitude of a group of

workers that is forward-looking, tolerant, and socially-minded. A few of the rules proposed by the Board, and the criticisms and suggestions of the teachers are here reproduced.

Sec 81 Exclusion of Partisan and Sectarian Questions.

Teachers shall not permit the introduction of questions of a sectarian or partisan character into their schools. (Proposed rule.)

This, of course, is the old, traditional rule, incapable of literal enforcement, because of the difficulties of interpretation. Numerous matters of historical and scientific fact and theory, and frequently even matters social, economic and political, are considered sectarian by various sects; and social, economic and political questions are considered partisan by almost all parties. One cannot commence to discuss good citizenship in a country governed by the party system without cutting cross sections thru all political parties. Our country would never have become a melting pot for all creeds and nationalities if the children had not come into contact in our public schools with a type of thinking and way of life often in violent contrast with their home environment, and habitual sectarian and political atmosphere.

The schools cannot develop mental fibre if the pupils are carefully shielded from knowledge of the topics that men and women think about. The schools cannot prepare for active citizenship, if the pupils are never allowed to discuss under intelligent supervision the problems of citizenship. The habits of tolerance and of intellectual fairness toward opponents, cannot be formed without the discussion of topics that give opportunity for their exercise. The failure of our schools to develop these habits has been made all too evident by numerous campaigns in which reason has been clouded by embittered intolerance.

The best of rules would require judgment in interpretation, but we believe that a wording can be found more in accordance with the spirit of our free schools, and we submit the following:

Whenever topics on which honest men differ arise in the classroom, as in the study of science, history, civics, English, it shall

be the duty of the teacher to inculcate the principles of tolerance, of the open mind, of courtesy and fairness to opponents; to stimulate intellectual honesty, and the desire to see all sides of a question; to emphasize the sacredness of the right of the individual to his own honest beliefs and convictions, provided only that they do not conflict with the rights and welfare of the community and of humanity.

Sec 81-b *Membership in Organizations.*

Membership by members of the Education Division in teachers' organizations affiliated with trade unions or federations, or with any body whose chief aim or whose effort is to thwart the purposes, policies or plans of the Board of Education, is prohibited.

This is simply a resurrection of the so-called Loeb Rule, scarcely modified, and extended argument for its elimination would not seem necessary. At a time when the first need of our country is unity, and when organized labor has demonstrated its loyal support of our high national purpose, this deliberate revival of caste feeling, and slur on labor affiliation, is indefensible. At any time the autocratic dictation of what organizations—religious, political, social or economic—teachers, or any other citizens, should or should not belong to, would savor of the Prussianism we are seeking to destroy. If such a rule can seriously be submitted in 1918 by the school administration of the second city of our land, there is indeed reason for the slogan, "Hold the Home Lines for Democracy."

Sec 81-c *Maintain Professional Standards of Conduct.*

The behavior of teachers toward the Board of Education and those holding positions of authority under the Board shall at all times be respectful and obedient. The standards of conduct of teachers, both within and without the schoolroom, shall be such as to comport with the higher ideals of the teaching profession, and their habits, conduct and character shall be such that the children under their charge should imitate.

We believe that it would be unfortunate if the Board of Education adopted the proposed rule. We consider the conception and the phraseology unworthy of both the teachers and the Board of Education. Respect cannot be secured by coercion; the superficial appearance of respect which might be successfully demanded by rule would be degrading to both parties. Mutual respect should be assumed; it is not an appropriate subject for legislation, at least in a democratic community.

Similarly with the emphasis of "obedience." If a teacher refuses to carry out legitimate instructions, the method of removal is provided. But efficiency is secured only when instructions are carried out in a spirit of cooperation, rather than of "obedience" to an official superior.

In order to make the rule include all members of the educational department and not merely the teachers, and to eliminate the features which would not call out the best efforts of the teachers, we respectfully submit the following substitute:

The Board of Education realizes that the schools can meet their full obligations to the public only thru the cooperation of the teachers, principals, supervisory staff, and Board of Education, and expects each of the four groups to aid in establishing and maintaining conditions favorable to the most effective cooperation.

There are also criticisms of the proposal to increase deductions for absence because of sickness, and the various efforts to undermine the civil service method of examinations.

On the basis of what the High School Teachers Federations have done in this case alone, one would be warranted in asking—nay, demanding—that the Board of Education step down and make way for their superiors—the teachers.

Report of Teachers' Defense Committee

TEACHERS' UNION OF NEW YORK

IN so brief a report as this, it will be possible to give an account only of the most significant items. The Defense Committee has been meeting regularly twice a week since December 2, 1917—a period of eight weeks. The Committee has held some very important and interesting meetings and has taken up seriously not only the continuance of the defense of the three dismissed teachers, but has rendered a very substantial service to Miss Fanny Ross, Miss Isabel Davenport, Mr Jacob Lind, and to the cause of the six teachers summarily transferred from the De Witt Clinton High School. The assistance offered to Miss Mary MacDowell has unfortunately not borne any

fruit. In addition, the Defense Committee planned several interesting public meetings at such varied centers as The University Settlement. The Church of the Ascension, The Church of the Messiah, The Brooklyn Philosophical Society, The Clark House, The Bronx Consumers' League, The Star Casino, The Women's City Club, The Rand School, The Ethical Culture Society, and others. One of the important incidental features of the meetings of the Defense Committee has been the preparation of plans for effective publicity, including the circularization of distinguished public citizens; an analysis of the nature of the topics to be discussed at public meetings; correspondence with members of the old Board; letters of recommendation addressed to the President of the present Board (especially in relation to the punishment of a teacher by suspending him or her without pay before the charges against the Defendant has been proved true); and a running correspondence with the State Department at Albany. One of the sensational achievements of the Defense Committee, accomplished thru its two most active representatives, Dr Linville and Dr Lefkowitz, was the meeting with His Honor, the Mayor. At that famous meeting the Mayor went on record as approving of The Teachers' Union and of its intelligent fight against autocracy in Education.

The Teachers' Union thru its Defense Committee has been able to draw to its side a goodly number of very earnest and very enthusiastic workers for the Cause; with equal success it has been able, without much effort, simply as the result of the excellence of its Cause, to gather in dollar bills to the extent of \$2700.00 or more, not counting in the \$500.00 donation of one of the converts of the old Board of Education. Among the more distinguished advocates of our Cause have been Lillian D Wald, Mrs John Dewey, Rev Percy Stickney Grant, Prof James Harvey Robinson, Prof Dewey, Oswald G. Villard, Mrs Joseph Fels, Randolph Bourne, not to mention at least fifty other distinguished publicist well-known as leaders of educated opinion in America. The entire labor movement of New York State is enthusiastically with us in this fight. Recently we have been fortunate in securing the services, as the attorney for the Union, of one of the most well-balanced and well-informed legal philosophers in America, Mr Gilbert E Roe. It may be said without exaggeration that the Teachers' Union, directly as a result of the recent activities of the Defense Committee, has created for itself a more solid foundation

and a more hopeful future than most of the members of the Teachers' Union are yet aware of.

At its most recent meetings, the Defense Committee has given its attention to various schemes whereby the Teachers' Union and its lively magazine, THE AMERICAN TEACHER, may grow in power and inspiration among the liberal-minded teachers of America. Mr Joseph Jablonower is in charge of two campaigns, one in behalf of a circulation of THE AMERICAN TEACHER and one in behalf of the dissemination among the various union locals in New York City of the facts concerning the case of the three dismissed teachers. New fields of cooperation are thus being opened wide for the development in New York City of a powerful Teachers' Union movement.

It may be interesting as a matter of intimate detail to know that each of the dismissed teachers has received \$200.00 as a temporary loan (until the day of reinstatement!) Some of the major expenses of the union have included:

- 1 \$500 to Mr Herbert Smyth for defense of the three men
- 2 \$200 to settle an old debt with our lawyer of last year, Mr O'Brien
- 3 \$500 for the publication of the volume of evidence
- 4 \$54 for the publication of the Summary
- 5 \$30 for the brochure "Shake your head and be dismissed"
- 6 \$60 for the pamphlet "The Truth About the Clinton Investigation"
- 7 About \$125 for the printing of The Appeal for Funds
- 8 About \$150 or more to the public typist for important typewriting connected with the Defense
- 9 Sundry expenses: stamps, paper, etc.

Kansas Teachers' Creed

WE recognize the tragic war in which our Nation is now engaged to be primarily the last stand of despotism and autocracy in human government—the age old contest in which usurped, entrenched political power masquerading under Divine sanction is in conflict with constitutional authority which derives its right to rule from the consent and approval of the governed.

What History Shall I Teach and Why?

ABRAHAM LEFKOWITZ

DE WITT CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL, NEW YORK

ABOUT two months ago several high school teachers discussed this question: What am I trying to do in my history teaching? Some felt that they ought to inculcate a love of reading, some to instil patriotism, some to prepare pupils to pass Regents' examinations, some to understand the present, some to train in logical thinking, some to develop mental powers, and some to teach the facts that every intelligent person is presumed to know. Despite the startling variety of aims, all were using substantially the same material and the same methods.

History is a word of everchanging content. Each age views the facts of the past in the light of its own knowledge and its own dominant interests. The dominant interests of each age act not only as a guiding or selecting factor but even color or interpret the events themselves. Thus, the Crusades have been regarded as the work of God, as the result of papal ambition, as necessitated by the advance of Mohammedanism or as great economic movements.

The world of to-day is dominated by the socio-economic aspects of life. The organizing idea is the efforts of mankind to create a democratic state that will give to all members of society an equal opportunity for the highest development. The achievement of that end is sought by two schools of thought—those who hold that the competitive idea should dominate society and industry as opposed to those who hold that the principle of cooperation for general welfare shall rule. The aim of history should be the creation of an intelligent citizenship which shall be able to comprehend the worldwide struggle of democracy to attain to a concrete realization such as the principle of cooperation indicates. This means a knowledge of both the good

and evil in the social milieu, that is, of money and banking, conservation of life and natural resources, of imperialism and international law, of trusts, socialism, sabotage, I. W. W., guild socialism, government ownership, single tax, prohibition, democratization of politics and industry, open diplomacy, government regulation, government by injunction and judicial interpretation, divorce, taxation, and various other vital problems that confront the citizen of to-day.

If, then, the chief purpose of history be the creation of an enlightened national citizenship, how shall we select facts that will help us achieve the end desired?

First, let us, as Prof. Robinson well says, select from the annals of the past those facts that have a positive bearing on the problems of the present, using the word "present" not in its immediate sense because our immediate present will not be the present of the children being taught, but rather in the evolutionary present. That is, the present toward which the socio-economic forces are tending. We must, therefore select such facts of the past as explain the growth of the federal principle, of religious toleration, of democracy in industry and politics, of the spread and growth of the cooperative idea and of the evolution of our dominant ideas as God, state, monarchy, etc. What vital bearing on the present have the Beotian War, the Retreat of the 10,000, the achievements of Periander, Agesilaus, and Epaminondas, and a host of other facts crammed into the adolescent? Why stress these facts and ignore Plato's Republic which deals with the Greek democratic ideal or the Achaean League dealing with the development of the federal idea? Who cares about the Jugurthine War or the achievements of Vitellus, Nero, or Claudius? But we are or

should be interested in Roman Imperialism, Roman law and the Roman class struggles which produced political equality?

Second, we must select for emphasis and teaching, wherever possible, those past facts that harmonize with the mentality and the desires of the adolescent. In the first year of high school history the fact phase should be stressed whereas in the third year the logical relations should be emphasized. We should teach the boy about voting not in his first term but in his last term just as he is looking forward toward the exercise of his rights as a citizen and voter.

Third, the facts selected must not only be presented interestingly and concretely so as to function vitally in actual life. Many harp on the salary paid to the mayor, but seem to be oblivious to the fact that the students do not know to whom to complain if the gas service is not up to specifications or if the manholes are broken. He is taught that the Constitution was framed to establish majority rule whereas it was framed to guard the interests of the minority and therefore, under it majority rule is not the result of design but of accident. He should be given the reality and not the sham. History should function both now and in the future.

Fourth, the current of history should be presented as an ever-changing stream, now moving fast, now slowly, now forward, occasionally backward but *ever onward*. Students like Heraclitus, must realize that all is flux, that the only unchangeable thing is *change*. Then and then only can the student be made to realize that the changes brought about by the trusts, the telephone, the telegraph, the railroad, the thousands of new machines, the growth of urban population and other numerous factors have changed America so that the Constitution framed for an agricultural population of 4,000,000 cannot properly meet our changed needs. Instead of realizing this fact, our students have been taught that the Constitution is the most perfect democratic document ever struck off by man and that to tamper with

it ever so slightly, is to undermine the foundations of modern society. To make the citizen of the future receptive to new ideas, upon which progress depends, he must be made to realize that all institutions must change with changing conditions, or else stagnation results.

The new principle outlined will mean that present needs and present environment will determine the curriculum. There is no justification in the chronological arrangement of the course of study other than that in the first place custom makes it easy to retain. The vital interest of every child is now in the war and in every grade of the high school it should be made the starting point for the study of historical facts connected with it. Every phase of human relations is being brought into prominence. In each term of the school course those phases nearest to the interests of the pupil of the age usually found in that grade will be studied in the light of their history. Commerce, government, industry, labor, military strategy, domestic relations will all find their place as topics of discussion. If there is anything in ancient history that throws light upon these problems (and there is) it will be studied. The pupil will be eager for it. But ancient history as such is dry and meaningless to the first term pupil. And modern history is just as meaningless, despite its modernity, if there is not a specific and well-directed attempt to conceive of it as throwing light upon the vexing problems of the day. Just which problems are suited for the first term boy or girl and which for the eighth term boy or girl is a matter for scientific study and research. Numerous experiments will be necessary. However, the principle is as plain as it is old (and, may it be said, unobserved). The subject matter must be chosen on the basis of what is needed for good living and what is interesting to the child. If we intend frankly to accept these principles, then let us do it whole-heartedly so that history may become, as it should be, the most vital subject in the whole curriculum.

Unionism Among the Teachers of the Capital City

THERE at present four teachers' unions in Washington, the High School Teachers' Union, the Grade Manual Training Teachers' Union, the Grade Teachers' Union, and the Armstrong-Dunbar Teachers' Union. These are affiliated directly with the American Federation of Teachers and indirectly with the American Federation of Labor.

SENTIMENT FOR TEACHERS' UNIONS STRONG AMONG SCHOOL AUTHORITIES IN THE CAPITAL CITY

Among those who have announced themselves as in favor of teachers' unions are the following:

The superintendent of schools.

The assistant superintendent of schools. Prominent members of the Board of Education.

The high school principals.

Six out of eight supervising principals in the grades.

A large majority of the building principals in the grades.

In no instance, to date, April 5, 1918, has any school authority voiced opposition.

UNITED STATES BUREAU OF EDUCATION

In this connection, it should be noted that there are 27 employees in the United States Bureau of Education who are members of the Federal Employees' Union. This list includes several specialists in education, well known thruout the country.

SENTIMENT FOR TEACHERS' UNIONS STRONG AMONG THE PRESS IN THE CAPITAL CITY

All four of the Washington papers have shown, in their news columns, a friendly spirit toward the formation of teachers' unions. Some have editorially supported them, as is shown by the following articles in the Washington *Herald* and the Washington *Times*.

Editorial in the Washington *Herald* of January 10, 1918:

A NEW UNION

A new local union is about to be added to the ranks of organized labor. It will

comprise the graded school teachers of Washington and will probably number nearly a thousand members.

The *Herald* wishes the new organization every success and hopes that it may obtain a new wage-scale for teachers who are at present horribly underpaid.

The salaries of Washington school teachers are below those which are paid to a number of their pupils when they leave school. The scale may have been an equitable one fifty years ago, but today it is at least 50 percent too low.

The teachers are using the proper methods in fighting for their rights and this paper will support them in their efforts.

Statement of the Ownership, Management, Circulation, etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, of THE AMERICAN TEACHER, published monthly (except July and August) at New York, N. Y., for April 1, 1918. State of New York, County of New York, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Joseph Jablonower, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of THE AMERICAN TEACHER, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership and management of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 448, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1 That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publisher, American Teacher Co., 70 Fifth Ave.; Editor, Henry R. Linville, 70 Fifth Ave.; Managing Editor, Benjamin C. Gruenberg, 70 Fifth Ave.; Business Manager, Joseph Jablonower, 70 Fifth Ave.

2 That the owners are: The American Teacher Co., Inc., 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.; Benjamin C. Gruenberg, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.; Mark Hoffman, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.; Henry R. Linville, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.; Gabriel R. Mason, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.; J. Edward Mayman, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

3 That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: Benjamin C. Gruenberg, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.; Mark Hoffman, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.; Henry R. Linville, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.; Gabriel R. Mason, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.; J. Edward Mayman, 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

4 That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

JOSEPH JABLONOWER,
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 22nd day of March, 1918.

[SEAL.]

MARY UTLEY.

(My commission expires March 30, 1920.)

SOCIAL SANITY IN WAR TIME

THE principle of national thrift finds its first and most vital application in the conservation and improvement of the health of the children. At least 1 per cent.—200,000—of the 22,000,000 school children in the United States are mentally defective.

Over 1 per cent., 250,000 at least, of the children are handicapped by organic heart disease.

At least 5 per cent.—1,000,000 children—have now, or have had, tuberculosis, a danger often to others as well as to themselves.

Five per cent.—1,000,000—of them have defective hearing, which, unrecognized, gives many the undeserved reputation of being mentally defective.

Twenty-five per cent.—5,000,000—of these school children have defective eyes. All but a small percentage of these can be corrected, and yet a majority of them have received no attention.

Fifteen to 25 per cent.—3,000,000 to 5,000,000—of them are suffering from malnutrition, and poverty is not the most important cause of this serious barrier to healthy development.

From 15 to 25 per cent.—3,000,000 to 5,000,000—have adenoids, diseased tonsils, or other glandular defects.

From 10 to 20 per cent.—2,000,000 to 4,000,000—have weak foot arches, weak spines, or other joint defects.

From 50 to 75 per cent.—11,000,000 to 16,000,000—of our school children have defective teeth, and all defective teeth are more or less injurious to health. Some of these defective teeth are deadly menaces to their owners.

Seventy-five per cent.—16,000,000—of the school children of the United States have physical defects which are potentially or actually detrimental to health. Most of these defects are remediable.

Dr. Thomas D. Wood, in *N. Y. Times*, April 14, 1918